

Amendments to the Specification

Please replace paragraph 595 with the following amended paragraph:

[0595] The β -galactosidase cDNA of the expression vector pCMV- β (Clontech, Palo Alto, Calif., USA, Gene Bank Accession No. UO2451) may be deleted by digestion with the restriction endonuclease NotI and replaced with a multiple cloning site containing, from the 5' end to the 3' end, the following sites: NotI, Ascl, RsrII, AvrII, Swal, and NotI, cloned at the region of the NotI restriction site. The sequence of this multiple cloning site is: 5'-
CGGCCGCGGCGCGCCCGGACCGCCTAGGATTTAAATCGCGGCC
CGCG-3' (SEQ ID NO:39).

Please replace paragraph 598 with the following amended paragraph:

[0598] A multiple cloning site comprising, from the 5' end to the 3' end the XbaI, EcoRI, SfiI, PmeI, NheI, SrfI, PacI, Sall and XbaI restriction sites having the sequence:
5'CTCTAGAATTTCGGCCTCCGTGGCCGTTTAAACGCTAGCGCCCG
G- GCTTAATTAAGTCGACTCTAGAGC-3' (SEQ ID NO:40), may be inserted at the level of the XbaI site (nucleotide at position 3329) of the vector pXCXII (McKinnon et al., 1982, Gene 19:33; McGrory et al., 1988, Virology, 163:614).

Please replace paragraph 571 with the following amended paragraph:

[0571] An electronic analysis of tissue distribution has been performed. The sequence of the transcript (~~SEQ ID NO: 1-4~~) SEQ ID NOS: 1-4 matches with 6 different Incyte templates numbered 54714.1, 1337198.1, 88352.1, 1337102.1, 222677.1, and 385780.1 (Incyte template September 2000 database [LGTemplatesSEP2000]) that are constituted of 5, 1, 2, 1, 14, and 1 ESTs respectively. The tissue origin of all these ESTs may suggest a preferential skin/epithelial cell expression (12 ESTs over 24 come from squamous cells, epithelial cells, or skin) of ABCA12 transcript.

Please replace paragraph 549 with the following amended paragraph:

[0549] According to a third aspect, the cells may be cells having a natural deficiency in anion transport, or cells pretreated with one or more anion channel inhibitors such as ~~Verapamil~~TM verapamil or tetraethylammonium.

Please replace paragraph 560 with the following amended paragraph:

[0560] In a total volume of 11.5 µl, 500 ng of mRNA poly(A)+ (Clontech) mixed with 500 ng of oligodT are denaturated at 70° C. for 10 min and then chilled on ice. After addition of 10 units of RNAsin, 10 mM DTT, 0.5 mM dNTP, ~~Superscript~~ SuperScript™ first strand buffer and 200 units of ~~Superscript-II~~ SuperScript II™ (Life Technologies), the reaction is incubated for 45 min at 42° C. We used poly(A) mRNA from placenta, testis, and fetal brain.

Please replace paragraph 564 with the following amended paragraph:

[0564] PCR products are analyzed and quantified by agarose gel electrophoresis, purified with a P100 column. Purified PCR products were sequenced using ~~ABI-Prism~~ ABI Prism® Big Dye terminator cycle sequencing kit (Perkin Elmer Applied Biosystems). The sequence reaction mixture was purified using Microcon-100 microconcentrators (Amicon, Inc., Beverly). Sequencing reactions were resolved on an ABI 377 DNA sequencer (Perkin Elmer Applied Biosystems) according to manufacturer's protocol (Applied Biosystems, Perkin Elmer).